

April 9, 1954

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1. Talks on United Action in Indochina - The Secretary has discussed with the Thai, Burmese, Indonesian, Vietnamese, and Cambodian Ambassadors, the Lao Minister and the Philippine Charge the "united action" concept as applied to Indochina. He told the Thai Ambassador that united action means that the nations concerned (the Secretary mentioned the UK, France, Australia, and New Zealand in addition to the above) should unite to use whatever means are available to oppose Communism in Southeast Asia; initially he hoped to see the creation of a political community probably with a military commission as an auxiliary prepared to use military or other means. If the nations of the area hold back, the Secretary said, it might be difficult to persuade the American people to contribute. The Secretary told the Philippine Charge that he did not consider this sort of association to be the same as a Pacific Pact but thought that it might prove to be the first step toward its establishment. He indicated to all the envoys that the French have asked for US participation in Indochina beyond our current assistance and that our decision would be conditioned by the development of a regional coalition and by the willingness of France to assure the Associated States of their complete independence including the right to withdraw from the French Union. He expressed the view, however, that the French Union concept provides a framework for the sovereignty of the Associated States and that it should work to the mutual interests of all concerned. He said that he hoped to obtain political agreement on these ideas before the Geneva Conference but that he contemplates no immediate need for the joint military action since the rainy season can be expected to limit the fighting. See draft for sources

2. Reactions to Secretary's Proposals - The Thai Ambassador has told the Secretary that he believes his Government will agree to the "united action" concept. The Burmese Ambassador said that both the Government and people of Burma regard the Indochina war as a colonial war and that therefore he did not believe his Government could participate. The Indonesian Ambassador gave the personal opinion that his Government would not be able to express itself one way or another on a matter of this nature before the Indonesian general elections now scheduled for early 1956. He expressed his personal realization of the importance to Indonesia of saving Indochina from Communism. Both the Burmese and Indonesian Ambassadors expressed pleasure in the Secretary's attitude regarding the independence of the Associated States. The Philippine Charge promised to seek his Government's views but noted that one difficulty might be that the Philippines does not recognize the Associated States. See draft for sources

3. Chinese Supplies Key to Dien Bien Phu - General Navarre has told US military representatives that he thought the battle of Dien Bien Phu

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Germany would become a full member of the Soviet bloc. The Embassy thinks that this categorical restatement of the Soviet position, which is completely irreconcilable with the Soviet proposal for European "unity" and "security", should be useful for general propaganda and also for drafting our reply to the recent Soviet note. Moscow 1217 4/8 (O)

5. NATO Council Discussion on East German Recognition - We have informed our representative on the North Atlantic Council that discussion in the North Atlantic Council on the recent Soviet declaration of "sovereignty" for the East German regime might be useful in establishing a common position against recognition by any NATO member. Any North Atlantic Council discussion of the subject should take for granted the solid opposition of all NATO members to East German recognition, with emphasis on the need for influencing other countries to refrain from recognition. To Paris TOPOL 1186 4/8 (S)

6. West Germany Requests Egypt Not to Recognize GDR - The West German Embassy in Cairo has made representations to the Egyptian Foreign Office on the recent Soviet declaration of East German sovereignty. The German Embassy reiterated that the Federal Republic of Germany is the only government which can speak for all Germans, and asked Egypt to refuse all attempts of the East Germans to install diplomatic representation. The Egyptian Foreign Office stated its policy is not to recognize East German Government "for the moment" just as in the case of Red China. Cairo 2178 4/8 (C)

7. Proposed Conference on Yugoslav Debt - The British Embassy in Belgrade has learned that the Yugoslav Government proposes to convene a conference of creditors in the near future to effect the long term refunding of the Yugoslav Government debt. The Yugoslav Government plans to approach the UK, US and France on the subject in an effort to obtain the cooperation of the other creditors, mainly Germany, Belgium and Austria. In response to a question as to the periods desired by the Yugoslav Government for repayment, the Yugoslav official said that his Government wanted the debt funded over a 15-20 year period. Belgrade 1098 4/8 (S)

8. Proposed Visit to US By Italian Defense Minister - Our Ambassador in Rome recommends that Italian Defense Minister Taviani be invited to make an official visit to the US. Taviani is a member of Iniziativa Democratica, the left of-center and largest group in the Christian Democratic Party a wing which is not always in full sympathy with our objectives in Italy. A visit to Washington and some of our industrial centers and military installations might alter his somewhat critical attitude. Rome 3138 4/8 (S)

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